



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE BIBLICAL WORLD

VOLUME XLIV

OCTOBER 1914

NUMBER 4

SHALL WE TAKE JESUS SERIOUSLY?

War puts that question to us with terrible frankness. We acknowledge Jesus as Lord but do we keep his commandments? We have prophesied in his name and in his name done many mighty works. But does he really know us as those who are taking up their crosses and following him?

The evidence of our real confidence in him we suddenly see does not lie in accepting dogmas concerning his person and nature. Orthodoxy no more than socialism has kept men from war. Millions of men who pray to the same Trinity, repeat the same creed, and anathematize the same heresies are busily engaged in killing each other. Militarism and false philosophies of history have made men forget Jesus, or have led them to make him into a new God of war with a helmet in place of the crown of thorns, carrying a rifle instead of a cross.

Greek orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Presbyterian, all of whom make identical confessions regarding the God-man, are killing each other with the same avidity as if there had never been a Jesus.

Evidently men can be theologically orthodox and put their Christ to an open shame.



Nor can we Americans be complacent in our neutrality. We have our Navy League and those who tell us that international morality is no stronger than military preparation. Incipient militarists urge us to distrust and hate the very nations to whom the church of Christ is sending missionaries to teach the primacy of the God of love.

Are we not even now being urged to grasp the world's trade as unhappy Europe sees it slip from the fingers that grasp the sword?

Suppose the Good Samaritan, finding the traveler struggling with the robbers, had run off with the traveler's luggage and clothes! Do you suppose Jesus would have told the rest of mankind to go and do likewise?

Is it Christlike to exploit another's misery?

War bids us measure the beam in our own eye.



Is the Sermon on the Mount good instruction for militarism? Do soldiers put the Golden Rule into their knapsacks?

Is "Love your enemies" printed on battle flags?

Did the soldiers or Jesus go to the cross to save the world?

Men tell us we must have war in order to be strong.

Jesus taught that we must become great by sacrificial service like his own.

Men tell us that we must build up the nation's morale by economic policies.

Jesus taught us that we cannot serve God and Mammon.

Men tell us that we must fight for our rights.

Jesus told us by word and by example that we must die for other peoples' rights.

Men tell us we must learn to fight, kill, and hate if we are to dwell in safety as a nation.

Jesus told us that God is love and that the way to peace is through a life that refuses to countenance hate and prefers loyalty to the crucified Christ to comforts with political supermen.

We thrust the question home. Do men who thus refuse to order their lives by Jesus' words and conduct really take him seriously? Is their profession of faith in his deity a profession of sympathy with his spirit, obedience to his word, and loyalty to his example?

Christendom's interest in the present war is vastly deeper than its horror at brutalities, its amazement at the world's indifference to poverty and sorrow. The ultimate issue is between Jesus and Nietzsche. If we take Jesus seriously, we shall not war. If we take him simply as a doctrine, distrusting the truth and practicality of his teachings, we shall go on fighting indefinitely.

The world's call to the church is obvious enough. Will the church answer it by training generation after generation to revere the teaching as well as the person of Jesus?